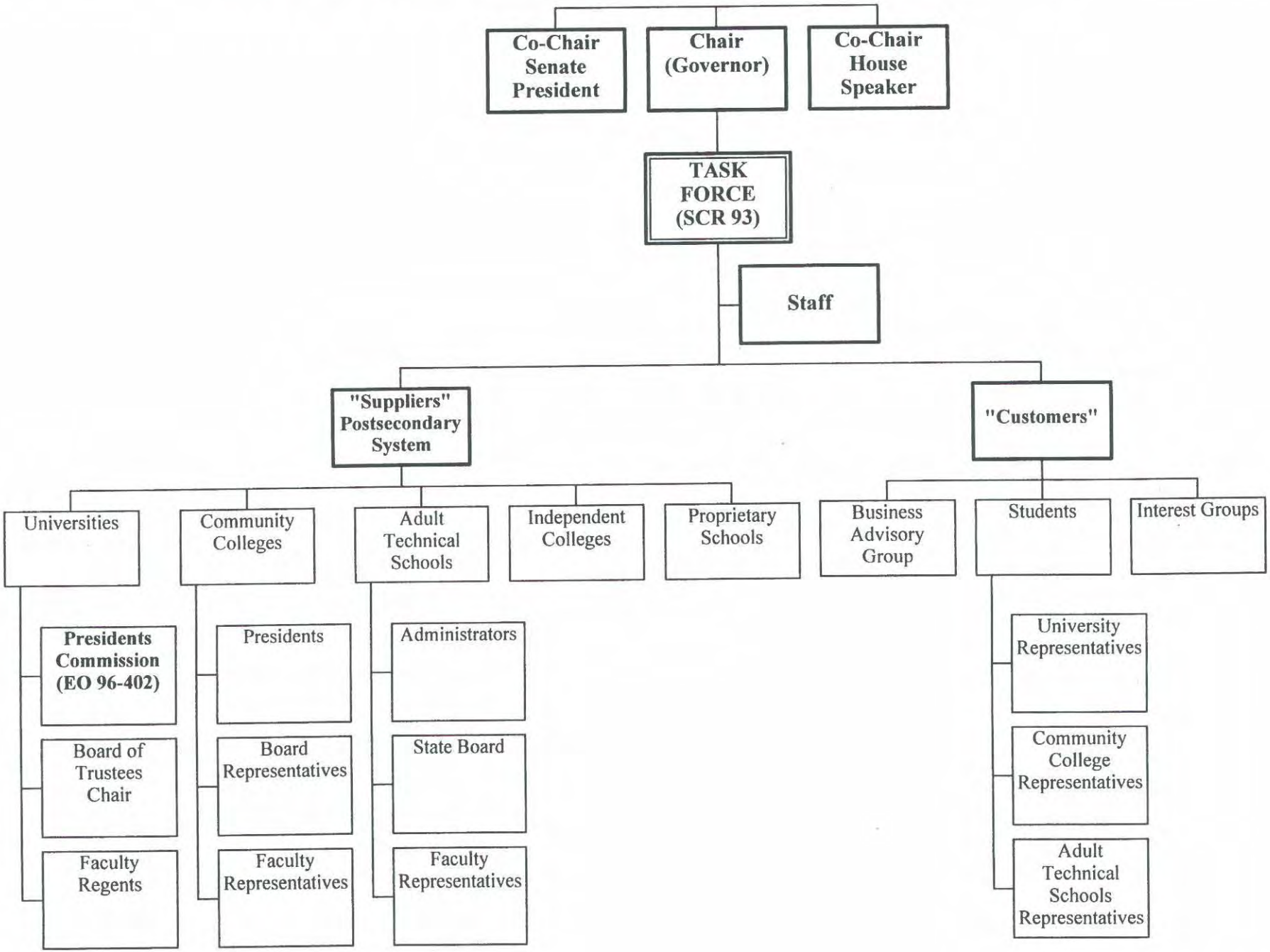
APPENDIX II

Postsecondary Education Task Force Advisory Group - Chart



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COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONAL EFFICIENCY AND COOPERATION

Executive Summary of the Final Report

The recommendations in this report offer a blueprint for accomplishing these tasks so that customers who hire Kentucky graduates are ensured of quality, and students who benefit from the educational services have the knowledge base and competencies they need. In this way, the Commission's recommendations will contribute to an enhanced standard of living for Kentuckians in the future.

Summary of Recommendations

The Commission recommends:

Coordinating Program Delivery

- The creation of a Commonwealth University.
- The creation of a Kentucky Electronic Library system.
- The establishment of incentives to encourage institutions to develop strong cooperative academic programs and to identify the most efficient distribution of academic degree programs.
- The provision of health services by appropriate institutions to the state's prison population through telemedicine.
- A review and rethinking of the program review and approval process.

Expanding Opportunities

- Further development of the Kentucky Information Highway and its use to meet the needs of higher education and other areas of state government.
- The establishment of a Kentucky Technology Initiative 2000 for support of instructional technology.
- The establishment of a network of technology academies for the improvement of academic skills in teaching and research.

Building Excellence

- The creation of a Commonwealth Trust Fund for Excellence to reward and recognize university initiatives which promote quality and excellence in the institutions.
- The creation of a scholarship pool to retain excellent academic students in Kentucky.
- The establishment of an Information Technology and Development Fund to provide institutions with the ability to build and test prototype solutions to common problems which require research, innovation, or emerging information technologies that could result in improved academic and administrative service delivery.
- Necessary changes be made in the funding model to reflect the recommendations of the Commission and the Task Force on Postsecondary Education.

Enhancing Management

- An efficiency survey of administrative functions be conducted by all institutions.
- The identification of areas of service to students by each institution which it intends to improve through more efficient administration.
- The identification of areas of administrative and academic activities by each institution which could be improved through inter-institutional cooperation.

FOCUS GROUPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1996 Session of the Kentucky General Assembly established a Task Force on Postsecondary Education to develop recommendations and an implementation plan for a system of postsecondary education in Kentucky that promotes quality instruction designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy.

To assist in this process, the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission retained Horizon Research International to convene a series of focus groups among various stakeholder segments across Kentucky's six Congressional Districts.

In all, 184 stakeholders participated in the focus groups. They represented a cross-section of institutions, industry segments, and demographic backgrounds from the various rural and urban areas of the Commonwealth.

The themes that emerged from this qualitative research were generally similar across regions and stakeholder segments. The following narrative provides an overview of the salient findings.

Skills Needed in the Future

These stakeholders felt that a person would require several specific skills or characteristics to lead a productive, high-quality life in the next century in a way that would contribute to the economic vitality of their own lives as well as that of Kentucky and the global economy. Those skills or characteristics included the following:

- Communication skills - The ability to communicate one's thoughts and opinions to others. This could be oral communication, written communication, interpersonal skills, and presentation skills.

- Computer skills - Computer literacy in a variety of software applications and familiarity with a range of computer systems.

- Flexibility/Adaptability - The ability to adjust to an ever-changing workplace. This was perceived as vital due to changes in technology and corporate downsizing trends.

- Global awareness - The recognition of foreign competition and opportunities. Global awareness skills included foreign language skills, familiarity with and tolerance of foreign cultures, and knowledge of current events.

- Critical thinking/Problem solving - The ability to think on one's feet in the event of a problem or crisis. A person must be able to think through a problem and come to a logical, effective solution.

- Lifelong learning - The realization that learning does not end with formal education. Changes in the workplace and technological advances will necessitate the ability and willingness to learn continually throughout one's life.

- Diversity skills - The ability to accept new and different ideas and people. This type of ethnic and cultural diversity can be applied to one's hometown and country as well as overseas.

- Teamwork skills - The ability to work with others in pursuit of a common goal. Teamwork skills included communication and interaction skills, the acceptance of new ideas, and leadership skills.

- Math skills - These skills were seen as necessary both for their usage in everyday personal and business lives and their inherent relation to logic and problem-solving skills.

The perceived necessity of communication skills and computer skills was consistent across all focus groups and always at the top of the list. The other characteristics were mentioned in most groups, but received varying degrees of emphasis dependent upon the particular stakeholder segment. By and large, Faculty, Board Members, and Business and Opinion Leaders were the most adamant about the full array of skills needed for the next century.

Success of Postsecondary Education

These stakeholders felt that the best ways to judge the success of postsecondary education were job-related standards. They cited the following:

- Job placement of graduates

- Job performance and advancement of graduates

- Job retention of graduates

Dialogue with businesses and surveys among graduates and business leaders would provide that yardstick of success, many said.

Role of Postsecondary Education

The perceived role of postsecondary education was simple: to prepare students for life in the "real world" with a solid foundation in the basics and a student's chosen discipline, they said.

- The main aspect of this was to prepare students to contribute to the workforce and the economic vitality of the Commonwealth of Kentucky with all the skills they defined for success.

- Additionally, postsecondary education was seen as a means by which students were taught how to learn continually throughout their lives and a way to expose them to ideas and opportunities with which they might not otherwise come into contact.

In short, the role of postsecondary education was to provide a strong foundation from which students would meet the demands of life and continue to grow in the ever-changing world, they said.

The Ideal Postsecondary Education System

During the discussion period, the respondents were broken into teams of three or four and asked to develop the ideal postsecondary education system or institution to provide the highest quality education that will effectively prepare students for the next century. They were to assume that Governor Patton and the legislative body had appointed them to develop this ideal system or institution, and that they had and "open checkbook" with which to work. The purpose was to uncover the perceptual dimensions that constitute a high-quality postsecondary education system. Here is the story that emerged.

a. Governance

These faculty, Board Members, and Business and Opinion Leaders felt that the ideal postsecondary education system would be overseen by a central coordinating board, possibly impaneled by representatives of each of the Kentucky postsecondary institutions, but the individual institutions would remain autonomous.*

- The schools would work together to alleviate such problems as nonarticulation of courses, duplication of services, and "turf wars."

- Technology such as distance learning would be employed to compensate for programs not offered in specific regions.

These stakeholders, particularly the business people, also felt that industry and business should be involved in the governance of postsecondary education as they receive the "products" of higher education – the graduates.

b. Critical Skills and Courses

The critical skills and courses to be taught in the ideal postsecondary education system mirrored those skills and characteristics that a person would need in the future to lead a productive, high-quality life.

- Again, communication skills and computer skills topped the list.

- Global awareness topics like foreign language classes and foreign culture classes were also popular, as were math and other analytic subjects due to their inherent relation to critical thinking and problem solving.

- Many stakeholders, particularly the Faculty, Board Members and Business Leaders, also stressed the importance of liberal arts or humanities courses to produce a well-rounded graduate.

Stakeholders felt that postsecondary institutions should continue to offer a multitude of academic programs, particularly those in medicine, law, communications, and liberal arts. The services to be stressed in the ideal system or institution included financial aid, internships, a strong advising and counseling service, and the use of technology in the classroom.

c. Quality Faculty

The ideal institution would be composed of an ideal faculty. These instructors would be knowledgeable, caring, effective communicators, and have a strong desire to teach. These traits were consistently mentioned by all stakeholder segments.

d. Support Services

The ideal postsecondary system of institution would have many support services. Those mentioned by respondents were the following:

- Computer labs with modern computers and up-to-date computer software that was in good working condition.

- Libraries with numerous, current resources and access to resources of other libraries via technology.

These schools should also have access to modern hardware like audiovisual equipment and, particularly in the technical schools, diagnostic equipment.

e. Administration Staff

The administration staff should be courteous, helpful, and flexible, the stakeholders felt. In an effort to reduce bureaucracy in the ideal postsecondary education system, the administrative staff was often described as "lean and mean." Stakeholders, particularly Faculty, felt the need for administrators to have backgrounds as educators.

f. Credit Transfers

All stakeholders concurred that, in their ideal postsecondary system, credit would be given for all classes taken, provided a respectable grade was earned. Course consistency at the various institutions would be emphasized, especially for core curriculum courses such as introductory English, math and history classes. Respondents acknowledged that this may not be possible in every situation, but efforts would be made to reduce the number of students who lose large amounts of credit hours because of transferring schools.

In summary, stakeholders said the ideal postsecondary education system would be one that teaches students all the skills deemed critical to lead productive, high-quality lives in the next century. The faculty would be knowledgeable, caring, and effective communicators, and the students and faculty alike would have many modern facilities and support services at their disposal. Stakeholders also felt there should be a more effective system in place for the transfer of credits between institutions. A central, governing body would be used to coordinate this system, as well as other services and offerings.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Postsecondary Education System

As a summary of the discussion period, the stakeholders were asked to share what they perceived were the strengths and weaknesses of the current postsecondary education system in terms of preparing students for a productive, high-quality life and meeting the needs of employment in the next century.

a. Strengths

Among the many aspects of the current system or institution that respondents listed as strengths, the quality of the faculty and the availability of postsecondary education throughout the Commonwealth topped the list. Respondents felt that many instructors at the various institutions throughout Kentucky generally embodied those characteristics of an excellent faculty discussed previously. They also praised the system for providing access to higher education to many different types of people in many different locations throughout the Commonwealth. Other perceived areas of strength included the following:

- Use of technology - Effective use of technological equipment like computers, diagnostic equipment, and audiovisual equipment as aids to educational instruction.

- Diversity of opportunities - Institutions were praised for providing students with a variety of subject areas to explore and learning opportunities like internships foreign travel, and research projects.

- Technical education - The vocational and technical schools were perceived as both meting a need and providing the workforce with quality, well-prepared graduates. Their use of applied knowledge and hands-on classrooms was praised.

- Well-rounded education - The postsecondary education system was perceived as providing an inclusive, well-rounded core education that allowed graduates to enjoy a high quality of life and bring other skills and knowledge to the workplace.

The current postsecondary education system was perceived as providing access to higher education to a variety of people across the Commonwealth. The quality of the faculty was praised, as were the accomplishments of the technical schools.

b. Weaknesses and Shortcomings

Funding was the most frequently mentioned shortcoming or weakness of the current postsecondary education system or institution. Many respondents felt that adequate funding would eliminate or alleviate many of the other weaknesses. Other areas in need of improvement included the following:

- Politics - A general term for bureaucracy and competition among institutions epitomized by the following:
  - "Turf wars" - The competition for students, funding, and degree programs on a regional basis.
  - Nonarticulation of courses - Mandated consistency of similar courses among individual institutions within the system. This nonarticulation of courses complicated credit transfers within the system.
  - Duplication of services - Statewide competition for students, funding, and recognition by offering exact or similar services, particularly specialized degree programs, at more than one institution within the system. This duplication was once necessary, but technology has eliminated the need for regional offerings.
- Use of technology - Effective use of technological equipment like computers, diagnostic equipment, and audiovisual equipment as aids to educational instruction was a weakness.
- Meeting industry needs - The lack of preparedness among graduates to meet the needs beyond the basics of a discipline including those skills deemed critical to a person's success and productivity and knowledge in his or her chosen discipline. This weakness also refers to education's inability to provide qualified graduates for fields where there is and will be a demand.
- Class sizes - Large, lecture-type classes were not perceived as conducive to the learning process. They deny the student the individualized attention that they so often need.

Interestingly, the use of technology was mentioned as a particular strength of today's postsecondary education system by some respondents while other felt that it was a weakness. This dichotomy tends to be function of regions and institutions. Technical schools and community colleges, especially those in Southeastern Kentucky, perceived that they did not have adequate access to modern equipment like teaching aids and computers. They also felt that classroom facilities were poor, citing old, uncomfortable classroom furniture and run-down buildings.

Conclusion

These stakeholders felt strongly that there were specific skills and characteristics that a person would need to lead a productive, high-quality life in the next century. Communication and computer skills were chief among these. They saw the role of postsecondary education as equipping students with these skills and enabling them to continue to learn and add to these skills throughout their lives to become productive members of the community.

This could be done through a mix of effective, knowledgeable instructors and a variety of current, up-to-date programs, services, and facilities. Modern computer facilities were seen as vital to this process. The quality of the faculty and the availability of higher education throughout the Commonwealth were seen as the strengths of the current system. Inadequate funding and unreasonable political issues were seen as weaknesses or shortcomings. Many stakeholders felt that proper funding would eliminate or alleviate many of the other weaknesses, but the effect of the profusion of politics would have to be solved by the administrators and legislators who were perceived as the ultimate cause.

Additionally, the preparedness of students entering the postsecondary education system was cited as a weakness, particularly by the Faculty groups. If students were to maximize their postsecondary education learning potential, they needed to be adequately prepared in primary and secondary education. These respondents felt that issues need to be addressed on this level before major strides can be made in higher education.

*Governance was not asked to Students and Citizenry for consideration in their "ideal" description of postsecondary education.

BOARDS AND COUNCILS

This report reflects the view of 58 individuals who serve on university governing boards, University of Kentucky community college boards, the State Board of Education, and the Council on Higher Education. The report was developed and refined by a 14-member steering committee drawn from the larger group. The group identified the following basic issues:

I. Improving services to students

II. Promoting improved cooperation among institutions

III. Improving quality

IV. Being more responsive to the needs of business and industry

V. Emphasizing the inclusion of the latest technologies

VI. Supporting and training faculty

VII. Providing adequate funding

More detailed observations are as follows:

Students are the Highest Priority

I. Students and their needs should be at the center of postsecondary education.

   A. Begin the student-centered orientation before students reach the campus.

   B. Emphasize connections between adequate high school preparation and postsecondary education success

   C. Give students ample time to explore career choices through programs like school-to-work.

   D. Encourage students to move on to some form of postsecondary education in order to be well-rounded citizens and prepared to be successfully employed throughout their lifetimes.

II. Attention must be given to the non-traditional student or adult learner.

   A. Even though these students may not seek a degree, they often seek to improve or elevate their skills for employment or personal reasons.

B. Adult students' deficits in reading, writing, and mathematics must be addressed to ensure that they can be employed – and retain employment – in the Commonwealth's changing economy.

III. Expand student access to postsecondary education

A. Make affordable postsecondary education accessible through a combination of on-campus and extended campus programs using emerging technologies and new methods of delivery. New approaches are needed to serve place-bound students.

B. Shifting responsibilities for welfare will require new approaches to education delivery and job placement.

Quality and Relevant Academic Offerings

I. Quality and relevance of academic offerings is of utmost importance.

A. More guidance counselors as needed in high schools and non-traditional students need similar support.

B. Students unprepared for postsecondary education should be remediated immediately upon enrolling.

C. Remediation must be easily available throughout the Commonwealth.

D. Community colleges should take the lead in making remediation available – either on-site or through off-campus or extended campus services.

E. Students prepared for postsecondary education should be advised effectively regarding the programs that offer employment potential. Students should understand the need for retraining over one's lifetime.

F. Academic programs to prepare students for the workforce should include skill development, math, and science, as well as a liberal arts education.

G. Quality should be assured at all levels and locations and all modes of delivery: on-campus, extended campus, and distance learning.

II. A system of cooperation must be developed between community colleges and Kentucky TECH. Students should be able to enroll in academic courses at the community colleges and technical courses at Kentucky TECH – leading to an associate degree if appropriate.

III. The liberal arts, as well as education for employment and economic development, should be encouraged for:

A. Preparation for graduate and professional education.

B. As critical for preparation of a literate population and improved quality of life.

C. Preparation of student to be part of a global marketplace.

Emphasize Business/Postsecondary Interdependence

I. Business must recognize critical role of postsecondary education in meeting the Commonwealth's needs and become directly involved.

II. Place more emphasis on strengthening the business community – postsecondary education relationships.

III. A responsive postsecondary education system is one that ensures that the needed programs and courses are available when and where they are needed. It is the business community" responsibility to make these needs known.

Faculty Development is Critical

I. Give faculty opportunities and training to adapt teaching and learning strategies to new technologies and to prepare to meet new challenges.

II. Impress upon faculty that they must change and accept new technological developments.

Review Facility Needs and Provide Access to New Technologies

I. Place priority on meeting postsecondary technology needs.

II. Approach capital construction needs differently.

A. Inventory capital construction needs and set priorities among possible projects; new projects should be curtailed until technology needs are met.

B. Assess the need for new facilities in light of the growing potential of technology-based teaching and learning.

C. Facilities that are renovated or newly constructed should include changes and equipment necessary for access to and use of technology.

Improved Cooperation and Coordination Are Necessary

I. Attitudes of isolation such as, "This is my institution and I will operate it as I see fit," are unacceptable.

   A. Issues of turf protection must be eliminated.

   B. All institutions must accept the fact that they are parts of a statewide postsecondary education network for the good of the Commonwealth as a whole.

II. Increase cooperation and eliminate unnecessary duplication between community colleges and Kentucky TECH.

III. Review the number of professional schools and curb unnecessary duplication of programs and course offerings where possible.

IV. Respect regional service areas of each university.

V. Review the systems of coordination and governance:

   A. Review the Council on Higher Education, Board of Adult and Technical Education, the Workforce Development Cabinet.

   B. Reform coordination of postsecondary education to encompass all sectors, including community colleges, proprietary schools, private and public universities and colleges, regional technical schools, and area vocational schools that offer adult education courses.

Increase Funding for an Improved Postsecondary Education System

I. Underwrite a system-wide commitment to make improvements with increased funding.

II. Provide funding increases in ways to promote achievement of improvements.

III. Give special funding attention to:

   A. Improving the technological condition of postsecondary education.

   B. Enhancing the faculty's ability to utilize technology in the teaching and learning process.

IV. Explore reduced spending, such as expenditure of state funds for athletics.

V. Tie future institutional funding increases to an institution's performance in meeting the goals set in its mission statement.

Defining the Mission

I. Every institution cannot be all things to all people. Each institution must define its mission and set its own goals.

II. Recognize the need for postgraduate education and research. Direct attention to making the land-grant university a first-class research university.

III. Emphasize literacy and technology in the mission of the vocational-technical schools.

IV. Identify strengths at each institution to develop and promote as its own area of excellence.

V. Emphasize remediation in the community college mission, as well as preparing students to enter the workplace or transfer into a four-year curriculum.

PRESIDENTS OF THE UK COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Expectation: that the Commonwealth is on the threshold of a dramatic change in postsecondary education, and that community colleges, as the leading partners in the preparation of the job-ready workforce and the primary providers both of education access and lifelong learning opportunities for all Kentuckians, will be the vital center of the change process.

The dilemma for the Community College System is determining how to provide access to higher education to more Kentuckians and how to empower more people through education and training. The system finds itself plagued by:

- policy restrictions which hamper student access and obstruct the on-time/on-target delivery of workforce education.
- turf struggles which tend to undercut out best collaborative efforts.
- chronic underfunding.
- a funding formula which fails to recognize key elements of the community college enterprise, especially in the areas of workforce education and community development.

To address these issues, we have identified a number of functional changes that are absolutely imperative if postsecondary education in general and community colleges in particular are to be transformed into a more responsive and effective system.

Focus: Access for Educational Attainment

- Make access to postsecondary education a priority in Kentucky, and fund two additional years of education for all high school graduates beginning in the year 2000.

- Move the Kentucky Adult Education Program to the Community College System and provide incentives for adults to move from workplace literacy programs and GED completion to earning an associate degree.

- Allocate technology funds through special appropriations outside the formula until the technological infrastructure is adequate, including ample professional development for faculty and staff.

- Create a *virtual community college* which broadens access to flexible, timely, accessible and relevant programs.

- Require the universities and community colleges in the same regions to develop and offer 2 + 2 programs needed by business and industry, using a seamless admissions/transfer policy.

- Include "collaborative efforts among postsecondary institutions" as a piece of the funding formula, and involve all postsecondary institutions in the *performance funding concept* — senior institutions, community colleges, and postsecondary vocational-technical schools.

- Clarify the missions for all postsecondary educational institutions, and then adequately fund all parts of their missions, including continuing education for workforce development.

- Fund the Community College System at the Southern Regional Education Board states' median level of funding per full-time equivalent student.

- Add a Community College System (CCS) alumnus/alumna to the Council on Higher Education and include the CCS Chancellor as a member of the Council of Presidents.

- Affirm the UK Community College System's governance structure. Recurring attacks on this structure simply drains resources, including time and energy, that are needed to address the Commonwealth's critical access issues. Furthermore, the University System/Community College System relationship promotes the integration of research and teaching and the application of knowledge and information to the solution of real-life problems. An example is Lean Manufacturing. This manufacturing system simulation, developed jointly by the UK Center for Robotics and Manufacturing Systems and the Toyota plant of Georgetown, is offered to business and industry by the community colleges.

Focus: Education and Training for the World of Work

- Identify the community colleges as the State's leading partners that work with the vocational/technical schools and state and local workforce development boards and agencies to provide centers for workforce education and training; and evaluate outcomes by regions. Use the Alliance for Business/Industry Services model at Jefferson Community College, which include the community college and Kentucky TECH/Jefferson Campus, and others.

- Allow the secondary and postsecondary education agencies of the state, including representatives of community colleges and vocational/technical schools, to jointly develop the education portion of block grants.

- Appoint community college and vocational/technical school representatives to all state and local-level workforce development boards and collaborative bodies.

- Identify lead community colleges as regional sector laboratories (extension agencies) for the transfer and practical application of technology from the university research laboratories to the workplace.

- Permit all 14 community colleges to offer the Technical Studies 1 + 1 program in collaboration with Kentucky TECH postsecondary institutions based on Council on Higher Education approval of one system-wide proposal.

- Provide "career ladder" seamless educational experiences as needed by business and industry at the 14 community colleges. Students could enter and exit with ease, as needed, adult basic skills offerings, GED preparation-testing, workplace proficiency testing, certificate and diploma programs, associate degree in applied science technical programs, and upper division college courses that senior institutions offer on community college campuses.

- Accelerate the functional blending of Kentucky TECH postsecondary schools and community colleges through regional coordination efforts, using Southeast Tech as a model. Southeast Tech in Middlesboro houses two institutions — the Bell County Campus of Southeast Community College in the UK Community College System, and Bell County Area Vocational Education Center in the Kentucky TECH System. Southeast Tech is an umbrella concept under which two separate systems operate for the benefit of students and workforce development.

- Provide tax incentives for businesses and industries that work in collaboration with postsecondary institutions for workforce education, training and retraining, including faculty/industrial exchange opportunities.

- Identify and address Council on Higher Education policies that restrict postsecondary educational institutions' responsiveness to their customers — students, industry, and government. Examples include restrictions on offering dual credit courses, restrictions on service areas in rural Kentucky, the 50% rule that limits technical course offerings by the community colleges, and the restrictive program-approval process versus a fast-track responsive process that can address job market challenges.

- Establish business and industry technical assistance centers at all of the community colleges. Three of the community colleges have business and industry technical assistance centers; eleven additional centers are needed.

Barriers and Incentives

Barriers to the Suggested Functional Changes

- Inadequate technology infrastructure.
- Restrictive Council on Higher Education policies.

- Inadequate and inequitable funding for postsecondary education institutions.
- Two different coordinating agencies serving postsecondary education institutions — the Council on Higher Education and the State Board for Adult and Technical Education.
- All postsecondary education institutions are not included in the accountability process created by the General Assembly.
- Requirement that continuing education (CEU credit) workforce training offerings must be "self-supporting", with very limited state appropriations.
- Insufficient investments in education and training.
- Too few business and industry technical assistance centers at the community colleges.
- Confusion on the part of business and industry as to where to go for what training and education.

Incentives for Making the Suggested Functional Changes

The incentives for making the suggested changes fall into two categories — positive outcomes for the Commonwealth and rewards for postsecondary institutions.

Positive Outcomes for the Commonwealth

- Improved quality of life for Kentuckians.
- An educated population, including re-educated older adult workers, that will promote economic growth, job creation, rising income, and prosperity.
- Elimination of employment discrimination through the education and training of the under-educated, jobless and poor.
- Successful transition from welfare to "workfare" to *employment.*
- An improved competitiveness for Kentucky for new and expanding industry.

Rewards for Postsecondary Institutions

- Annual recognition for the achievements and accomplishments in postsecondary education.
- An accountability and funding system that is in total alignment with each of the critical elements of the Community College System mission, including *access for educational attainment and education and training for the world of work.*